

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00009 050705Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
OMB-01 DHA-02 /070 W
-----050708Z 075535 /20

R 041520Z JAN 77
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5560
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 0009

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SF
SUBJ: POST MORTEM ON RECENT VIOLENCE IN CAPE TOWNSHIPS

REF: CAPE TOWN 1292

1. FOLLOWING THE CLASHES BETWEEN MIGRANT WORKERS AND RESIDENTS (MOSTLY YOUTHS) OF CAPE TOWN'S BLACK TOWNSHIPS OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY (REFTEL) CHURCH GROUPS AND CHARITABLE AND SOCIAL ACTION ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CONCENTRATED ON PROVIDING FOR IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF HUNDREDS OF REFUGEES WHOSE HOMES WERE BURNED. FINAL TOLL NOW PUT AT 26 DEAD, 106 INJURED, 81 HOMES AND 5 HOSTELS DESTROYED AND 94 OTHER HOMES DAMAGED. PROPERTY DAMAGE SAID TO BE ON ORDER OF 350,000 RANDS (R1.00 - \$1.15).

2. MOST OF DAMAGE WAS CONCENTRATED IN NYANGA TOWNSHIP WHERE MIGRANT WORKERS OF AMABHACA (A THOSE SUBGROUP FROM THE TRANSKEI) ARE QUARTERED. ACCOUNTS VARY AS TO HOW CLASHES STARTED BUT IT CLEAR THAT ON DECEMBER 25 AND 26 THERE HAD BEEN FRICTION BETWEEN MIGRANT WORKERS AND
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YOUTHS WHO DEMANDED CLOSING OF ILLEGAL LIQUOR OUTLETS (SHEBEENS) AND OBSERVANCE OF HOLIDAYS AS TIME OF MOURNING FOR BLACKS KILLED IN EARLIER RIOTS. AT LEAST SOME ATTACKS ON HOSTEL DWELLERS APPARENTLY TOOK PLACE. ON NIGHT DECEMBER 26 WORKERS RETALIATED EN MASSE, ATTACKING RESIDENTS AND SETTING FIRE TO HOMES AND OTHER PROPERTY RESULTING IN MASS EXODUS OF RESIDENTS TO NEARBY

LANGA AND GUGULETU TOWNSHIPS.

3. PATRICK MOTOLENGWE, FIRST BLACK ANGLICAN BISHOP IN THE CAPE HAS JOINED UP SPOKESMAN NICK OLIVER IN CALLING FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY WHILE PRP SPOKESMAN DR. ALEX BORAINÉ IN RECENT SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT MIGRANT LABOR SYSTEM WAS TO BLAME. BORAINÉ NOTED THAT MIGRANTS HAD NO ROOTS OR TIES IN URBAN COMMUNITIES. WHILE STUDENTS VIEWED SHEBEENS AS SOURCES OF DRUNKENNESS AND WEAKNESS, FOR MIGRANTS, DEPRIVED OF NORMAL FAMILY LIFE, THEY ARE A FORM OF SOCIAL CENTRE AND SOURCE OF COMMUNITY CONTACT.

4. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT CLASHES WERE NOT "FACTION FIGHTS" AS DESCRIBED SOME NEWS REPORTS NOR, LIKE RIOTS OF LAST AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, WERE THEY DIRECTED AGAINST THE WHITE POWER STRUCTURE. WHILE UNEASY TRUCE PREVAILS FOR NOW, TENSIONS BETWEEN MIGRANTS AND RESIDENTS REMAIN HIGH AND COULD ERUPT ON VERY SLIGHT PRETEXT. NEXW REPORTS OF JANUARY 3 INDICATE STUDENTS REMAIN DETERMINED TO STAMP OUT SHEBEENS. TRANSKEI CONSUL IN CAPE TOWN IS REPORTED TO HAVE CALLED ON SHEBEEN OPERATORS TO CLOSE DOWN WHILE APPEALING FOR BOTH SIDES TO ESCHEW VIOLENCE. ADDED COMPLICATION IS FACT THAT SHCOOLS RE-OPEN JANUARY 5 FOR CATCH-UP COURSES AS RESULTS OF LAST YEAR'S SCHOOL BOYCOTT. STUDENTS' RESPONSE REMAINS UNPREDICTABLE BUT EFFORTS TO VDISCOURAGE ATTENDANCE COULD WELL LEAD TO CLASHES WITH POLICE. IN SHORT, POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER REMAINS HIGH FOR FORESEEABLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FUTURE.
WHITE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, HOUSING, MIGRATORY WORKERS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 04-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Errors: N/A
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Film Number: D770003-1284
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770183/aaaacukd.tel
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Litigation History:
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